







Mediterranean 1-73



USS Ponce LPD-15

Ship's History

The Amphibious Transport Dock USS PONCE (LPD-15) is the first ship of the fleet to be named in honor of the city of Ponce, Puerto Rico. The city is in turn named in honor of the Spanish explorer, Ponce de Leon.

An Amphibious Transport Dock, PONCE is the newest of the most versatile class of amphibious assault ships. It combines the troop carrying capability of the LPA, the floodable well deck and landing craft capability of the LSD and the helicopter operating deck of the LPH. When loaded, PONCE carries a balanced unit of 923 Marines, their combat vehicles and their combat cargo, thus maintaining the combat integrity of assault forces during extended deployments. Using a ballast system much like that on a submarine, the floodable well deck allows beach assault by amphibious landing craft launched from PONCE'S stern. Tactical flexibility is reflected in her ability to employ the concept of "vertical envelopment." Ship's armament consists of four twin 3-inch 50 caliber rapid fire, dual purpose gun mounts. USS PONCE was constructed by Lockheed Shipbuilding and Construction Company, Seattle, Washington. Her keel was laid on 31 October 1966, and she was launched on 20 May 1970. Following delivery to the Navy on 25 June 1971, PONCE was commissioned on 10 July at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington. Principal speaker was the Honorable Jorges Luis CORDOVA, Resident Commissioner (Congressman-at-large) from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. An honored guest was Juan H. CINTRON, Mayor of Ponce, Puerto Rico.

In late August, PONCE commenced her maiden voyage to her homeport, Norfolk, Virginia. Ports of call on the West Coast included San Francisco and San Diego, California, and Mazatian and Acapulco, Mexico. Upon departure from Mexico, three MSO's of the Spanish Navy were refueled by PONCE enroute to the Panama Canal.

Transiting the Panama Canal in one day, PONCE reached her homewaters of the Atlantic Fleet on September 15. Port calls at Ponce and San Juan, Puerto Rico provided a welcome to be long remembered. This first visit to Ponce, Puerto Rico witnessed more than 10,000 visitors aboard during a four day period.

Shakedown training in October and November followed by Amphibious Operational Training in January 72 sharpened the basic shipboard skills of PONCE'S crew and readied her to an active role in the Atlantic Fleet.

In February 1972 following a trip up the Mississippi River to New Orleans, La., PONCE provided hotel accommodations for Navy and other military units participating in the Mardi Gras festivities.

Following final contractor trials in December 1971, PONCE spent six weeks in Philadelphia Naval Shipyard for her Post Shakedown Availability in March and April. Upon completion of PSA in mid-April PONCE returned to Norfolk to commence preparations for her first operational deployment to the Caribbean.

In June 1972 PONCE became a member of Amphibious Squadron Six and deployed to the Caribbean for two six week periods. An additional Squadron shift placed PONCE in Squadron Two on 1 November 1972 and preparations for a six month Mediterranean deployment were begun.

On 5 January, with units of first Battalion Sixth Marines embarked, PONCE sailed from Morehead City for duty with the Sixth Fleet.

CAPT GEORGE W. FARRIS, USN



Commanding Officer

10 July 1971 - 9 May 1973

Captain George W. Farris, a native of San Jose, California, enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1942 and served several years prior to being sent to the NROTC unit at the University of South Carolina where he was subsequently commissioned in 1946. He then had successive tours of duty in USS FRANK KNOX (DDR-742), USS EPCER 857 and USS THEODORE E. CHANDLER (DD-717) extending through July of 1949. Following a year in the inactive reserve, he was recalled to active duty incident to the outbreak of the Korean War and in September 1950, participated in re-commissioning USS WALKE (DD-723) as Navigator and later as Operations Officer. He was serving in USS WALKE when she was severely damaged by enemy action in June 1951 off Wonsan, Korea, with heavy loss of life. From this followed duty in the Far East as Commanding Officer, USS SAUSALITO (PF-4). Later came shore duty at NAS, San Diego. This was followed by a tour as Administrative Assistant at Headquarters, United Nations Command Far East Command in Tokyo. In December 1954 he became Aide and Flag Lieutenant to COMSERVRON THREE, homeported in Sasebo, Japan. Subsequent duty assignments were as Executive Officer, USS MELVIN R. NAWMAN (DE-416) and Operations Officer, USS CHILTON (APA-38), wherein he participated in the U.S. amphibious landing in Beirut, Lebanon in 1958.

Following a tour of duty in the Bureau of Naval Personnel, he next served as Executive Officer, USS EDSON (DD-946). In August 1963 he attended the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia and later, following completion of the Attache course at the Defense Intelligence School, served as Assistant Naval Attache and Naval Attache for Air in Madrid, Spain. He was ordered to command of USS O'BRIEN (DD-725) in August 1966, During this tour, USS O'BRIEN twice deployed to the Tonkin Gulf and was slightly damaged on an Operation Sea Dragon coastal surveillance mission, before the North Vietnamese shore batteries were silenced by counter-battery fire and air strikes. His next duty assignment was as Head of the Naval Estimates Branch in the office of Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence) in Washington, D.C. before being ordered to place USS PONCE (LPD-15) in commission and assume command. He has thrice been awarded the Bronze Star Medal (with Combat "V") for combat actions both in the Korean and Vietnamese conflicts.

Captain Farris is married to the former Eleanor Vanderberry of Norfolk, Virginia.

Captain Warwick relieved Captain Farris as Commanding Officer on 9 May in Athens, Greece.

Change of Command 9 May 1973









CAPTAIN WILLIAM B. WARWICK, USN



Commanding Officer

9 May 1973

Captain William B. Warwick, USN, was born 28 April 1929, in Columbus, Ohio. While in high school he was sworn into the U.S. Navy in the Aviation Midshipman

Program and later attended Purdue University.

Upon completion of flight training in April 1950, he was assigned to Fighter Squadron TWENTY-FOUR. While in VF-24 he took part in three Korean deployments flying the F4U Corsair initially, and later the F9F Panther, from the decks of the carriers BOXER, VALLEY FORGE and PHILIPPINE SEA. In October 1952, Captain Warwick was assigned to the Naval Air Advanced Training Command as a flight instructor. He next served as Assistant CIC Officer, first in FORRESTAL and then in SARATOGA while the ships were in the process of being commissioned and fitted out.

In April 1957, Captain Warwick was assigned to Heavy Attack Squadron ELEVEN. Flying the A3B Skywarrier, he deployed to the Sixth Fleet aboard ROOSE-VELT.

He attended the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California for two years and upon graduation in August 1961, was assigned to the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. In August 1963, he joined Attack Squadron SEVENTY-FIVE, the first fleet squadron to fly the A-6A Intruder all-weather attack aircraft. Deploying with Attack Carrier Air Wing SEVEN aboard INDEPENDENCE in May 1965, he participated in combat operations in Viennam.

He assumed command of VA-75 while still in the combat theater and retained command until VA-75 was again deployed, this time to the Mediterranean. Captain Warwick next reported to the Air War College at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama for a one year course of intensive professional study. He detached from the college in May 1967, and proceeded to NAS, WHIDBEY ISLAND to become the first Commanding Officer of the West Coast A6A Replacement Training Squadron, VA-128.

His next assignment was in the Bureau of Naval Personnel where he was the Aviation Commander Detailer.

In June 1970, he reported to USS FORRESTAL as Executive Officer. His most recent assignment was with COMNAVAIRLANT as Assistant Chief of Staff for Readiness.

Captain Warwick is married to the former Sally Ann McFadden of Indianapolis, Indiana. He resides with his wife and three children; Dianne, Robert and James in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



COMMANDER DAVID W. SOMERS

Commander William D. Daniels comes to PONCE from the Bureau of Personnel where he served in the Officer Distribution Section.

His Naval career began in 1944 when he enlisted in Birmingham, Alabama, his home of record. After Recruit Training and Signal School he served in the Pacific during the latter part of World War II. Assignments with the Service Force and with the Royal Australian Navy were completed in the New Guinea and Philippine areas. Following World War II, he served with the Atlantic Fleet Mine Force and at the Charleston Naval Base.

Commander Daniels entered the Naval Academy in 1950 and was graduated with the Class of 1954. During his first class year he served as Deputy Brigade Commander and remained on duty at the Academy after graduation in June of 1954.

Following an assignment as First Lieutenant in USS LAFFEY (DD-724), he entered Submarine School at New London, Connecticut, and, upon completion of the course, was assigned to USS BURRFISH (SSR-312) as Communications Officer. Subsequent submarine duty assignments included Department Head billets as Torpedo Officer in USS SEA CAT (SS-399) and as Engineer Officer in USS CORPORAL (SS-349).

Commander Daniels completed a previous tour of Amphibious Force duty in 1968 after serving as First Lieutenant in USS PRINCETON (LPH-5) for two and one half years. Three Western Pacific deployments and nine amphibious assaults in Vietnam were conducted by PRINCETON during this period.

Additional shore duty assignments have included a tour as Commanding Officer, Naval Reserve Training Center, Omaha, Nebraska, and a tour on the staff of Commander Naval Reserve Training Command.

Commander Daniels and his wife, the former Joan Harvey of San Antonio, Texas, have three children; William Dwight, Jane and Kim. They currently reside at 4032 Hadley Lane, Fairfax, Virginia.

Commander Somers relieved Commander Daniels as Executive Officer on 24 April 1973.

Executive Officers

Commander David W. Somers comes to PONCE from the USS NEWMAN K. PERRY (DD-867) where he served as Executive Officer from April of 1971,

Commander Somers graduated from the University of Maryland in 1955 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics. He also has a Masters degree in International Affairs which he obtained from George Washington University in 1967.

His Naval career began with his being commissioned Ensign through Officer Candidate School in August of 1956. Commander Somers' tour assignments include serving as Executive Officer on the USS SPOONBILL (MSO-202), USS T. J. GARY (DER-326), and USS NEWMAN K. PERRY (DD-883). Other assignments were as Boat Group Commander on the USS HENRICO (LPA-45), 2nd Division Officer on the USS ROBINSON (DD-562), and as Operations Officer on USS STRIBLING (DD-867).

Significant Naval schooling that Commander Somers has attended include the Naval Destroyer School in 1963 and the Naval War College in 1967.

Commander Somers presently resides in Virginia Beach, Virginia with his wife Carolyn and two children David II and Jennifer.



COMMANDER WILLIAM D. DANIELS

Med 1-73 Itinerary

Enroute

Enroute

3 July

Naples, Italy

4 January 1973	Underway
5 January	Morehead City, North Carolina
5 - 15 January	Enroute, Rota, Spain
15 - 16 January	Turnover
16 January	Enroute
17 January	Turnaway Landing
18 January	Enroute
19 - 22 January	Cap Ferrat, France
23 - 24 January	Enroute
25 - 30 January	PHIBLEX 7-73
31 January	Enroute
1 - 7 February	Malaga, Spain
7 February	Enroute
8 - 14 February	PHIBLEX 8-73
15 - 19 February	Enroute
19 - 25 February	National Week XV
26 - 28 February	Enroute
1 - 6 March	Taranto, Italy
6 - 8 March	Enroute
8 - 14 March	Amphibious Exercise
14 - 21 March	Athens, Greece
21 March	Timbakion, Crete
22 March	Enroute
23 March	lzmir, Turkey

23 - 26 March

26 March

26 March

27 March - 2 April	PHIBLEX 10-73
3 - 4 April	Naples, Italy
4 - 6 April	Enroute
7 - 9 April	lzmir, Turkey
10 - 12 April	Enroute
13 - 18 April	PHIBLEX 10A-73
18 April	Enroute
19 - 28 April	Palma, Mallorca
28 April - 1 May	Enroute
2 - 11 May	PHIBLEX 11-73
7 - 9 May	Athens, Greece
9 May	Change of Command
12 - 14 May	Enroute
15 - 19 May	Venice, Italy
20 May	Enroute
21 - 29 May	Brindisi, Italy
30 - 31 May	Enroute
I - 7 June	Athens, Greece
3 - 15 June	DAWN PATROL
16 June	Enroute
16 - 18 June	Toulon, France
18 - 21 June	Enroute
21 June	Rota, Spain
22 June - I July	Enroute
2 July	Morehead City, North Carolina

Norfolk, Virginia



















LCDR E. Romero DECK OFFICER



LTJG R. Fledderman ASS'T IST LT.



ENSIGN J. DiCarlo IST DIVISION OFFICER



ENSIGN T. Powers 2ND DIVISION OFFICER



LTJG W. Forbes 2ND DIVISION OFFICER



LTJG R. Weaver WEAPONS OFFICER









BM1 D. Gillem

BMI D. Williams







BM2 J. Meredish

BM3 C. Thompson SN J. Caterina







SN 11, Kenon



SN V. Malin



SN J. Mauthe



SN F. Moon



SN A. Nicholson



SN R. Palm



SN D. Swesey



SA L. Banks



SA W. Beniter



SA D. Binnie



SA D. Bono





SA S. Burney



SA S. Coffey



SA C. DiBlasio



SA D. Dillon



SA T. Dunning



SA E. Friedewald SA H. Green





SA B. Hammond



SA K. Hanson





SA C. Henderson SA R. Holcombe SA T. London





SA E. McDandal SA D. Metcalf





SA J. Moler



SA R. Rutledge SA K. Snyder





SA M. Thorne



SA E. Williams



SR M. Daugherty SR R. Rollins





SR T. Zueger



BM1 W. Taylor



BM2 R. Comstock BM3 L. Daniel







BM1 J. Trujillo

BM3 C. McNamara SN C. Adkins







SN J. Attardo

SN L. Brown



SN G. Collins



SN S. Mares



SN D. Quick



SA J. Clcciu



SA L. Combs



SA K. Condon



SA J. Donnelly















SA J. Glidden

SA G. Guinan

SA R. Kimbel

SA M. Lloyd

SA J. Melvin

SA K. Morehead

SA J. Nooney









SA J. Patterson

SA M. Reid

SA W. Shivers







SA R. Smith



SA G. Stache





SA W. Webster



SA M. Wilson



SA R. Woody



SR G. Darling



SR G. Berrafato



SR S. Mitchell SR C. Steele









GMG1 W. Gommer FTG1 W. Knight







FTG2 W. Brinker GMG3 G. Dekater FTG3 G. Graham



GMG3 J. Kennedy SN R. Clewell





SN J. Johnson



SN R. Klay



SN S. Lindsey



SA D. Manlick



SA A. Miller



SA R. Reed



SA B. Swanson



SR D. Ferguson









LCDR R. Heins ENGINEERING OFFICER



ENSIGN W. Roberts
MPA



CWO3 S. Nelson E DIVISION OFFICER



LTJG W. Dirga A DIVISION OFFICER



BTC J. Pearman



HTC J. Allen



MMC. D. French



EMC. J. Letitia



FNC W. Morgan



MRI D. Branton MMI C. Jackson



ENI J. Roberts



EN2 J. Armstrong EN2 J. Beard









EN3 R. Esquibel





EN3 E. Hellegers MR3 G. Peasgood EN3 T. West



MRFN D. Kinney



MRFN D. Kreischer FN C. Tilden



ENFA G. Brode



ENFA G. Jenkins









ENFA R. Lancaster ENFA J. Roskowski ENFR E. McCartney









BT1 J. Coleson

BT1 D. Weingartner





BT2 L. Byrd

BT2 R. Schaffner







BT3 R. Hattley

BT3 M. Stricklin









FN D. Collinsworth FN W. Decker







FN R. Heebner









BTFN R. Justice BTFN M. Manuel FN D. Pereault















BTFN C. Wells FAR. Alford

BTFA M. Ashman BTFA C. Campbell FA L. Combe

FA T. Giffin

BTFA K. Grant



FA E. Jeter

FA T. Plummer

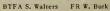






FA G. Uhl FA J. Spurgeon













FR G. Osborne





FR D. Tilley







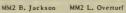




MM1 C. Halverson MM1 W. Conley













MM3 J. Bush



MM3 R. Goss



MM3 D. Jacks



MM3 K. Meerdink



MM3 J. Mikowicz MM3 M. Tyson



FN S. Bourne



FN J. Edradan



MMFN G. Griswald



FNF. Prestenback FN R. Strait



MMFN L. Webb



FA J. Bradley



MMFA D. Ellmore







FA N. Jones FA A. Kostal









FA T. Robinson FA T. Shireman MMFA A. Volker FR M. Bailey















FR R. Swanson

FR R. Whatley



HT1 R. Burk HT1 J. Lockard



HT1 D, Ott



HT2 J. Albert



HT2 S. Woodard









HT2 D. Dove



HT3 R. Morris

FN D. Bishop

HTFN E. Bush







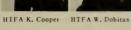
HTFN A. Hubbard HTFN S. Kelley HTFN C. Lehman



HTFN P. Passaretti HTFN R. Wickland



















HTFA R. Dull

HTFA C. Gehman FA J. Nicholn

HTFA R. Ryner

FA F. Smith









EM1 L. Holman

IC1 S. Pelech

EM1 T. Thurston IC2 T. Hopton







EM2 G. Linn

EM3 C. Lawrence











EMFN K. Heller

EMFN R. Jimenez





ICFN R. Nelson SN J. Sabino











EMFA J. Baucom EMFA D. Green EMFA C. Meckfessel EMFA M. Spell

Brindisi























Cook-out





















Athens











Navigation



LT J. Schnieders NAVIGATOR



QMC J. Torbich





QM1 A. Eaton



QM3 R, Hauser



QM3 M. Subda



SN R. Haladarda



QM2 S. Jones



QM3 W. Batchman



SA J. Prenley



French Riviera.









Naples

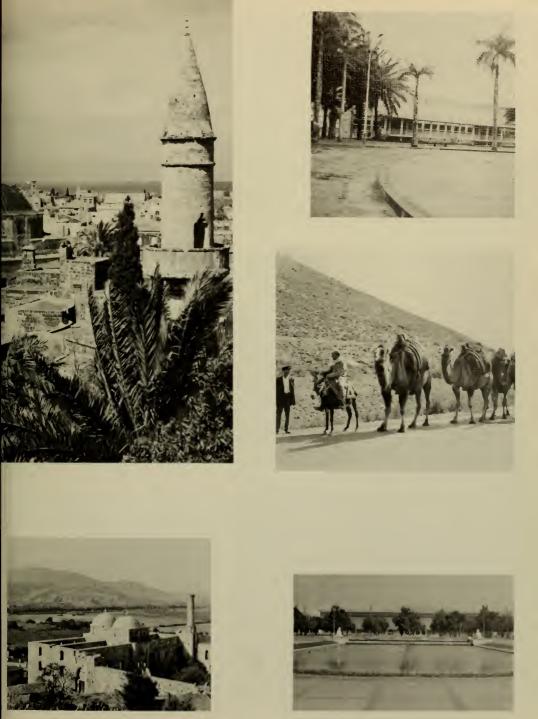




Izmir Truker









Chiefs' Initiation







Supply at Work







Taranto









Italy





Palma

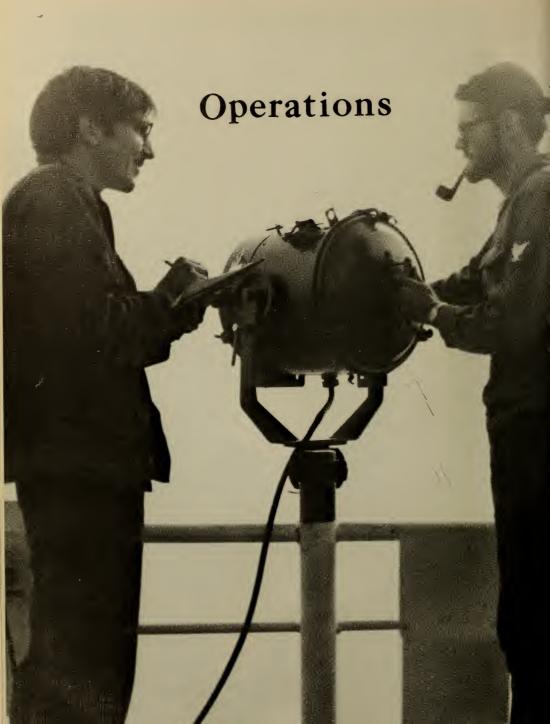














LCDR W. O'Malley OPERATIONS OF FICER



LT L. Kiernan ASS'T. OPERATIONS OFFICER



ENSIGN K. Ganzer CIC OFFICER



CWO2 J. Thaxter EMO



LTJG P. Danforth COMMUNICATIONS OF FICER



OSC D. Woods



SMC H. Lorick



RMC C. Newman



ET1 D. Slinski









ETN2 R. Sanders ETR2 D. Shook

ETN2 J. Skinner







ETN3 M. Ford

ETR3 A. Rodriguez ETN3 L. Walters











ETR3 R. Shaffer ETN3 S. Hyatt

ETR3 K. Peterson







ETRSN J. Sternberg ETRSN G. Carnprobst ETNSN R. Turner





FTRSA G. Kushner









SMI D. Ballard

SM1 L. Crandall

RM1 D. Fischer







RM1 B. Parsons





SM2 L. Rinear



RM2 J. Szymanski RM2 J. Warren



RM2 A. Wingate



RM3 R. Bartlett



RM3 R. Besenyei















RM3 J. Blackketter RM3 S. Drury

RM3 W. Lincoln

SM3 C. Marino

RM3 L. O'Tool SM3 J. Ouellette

RM3 T. Sawyer







SMSN D. Griffin RMSA J. Greer











RMSA J. Horne

RMSA M. Palmer SR C. Kehn









OS2 S. Wheeler

EW3 C. Deer

OS3 R. Hardin

rdin OS3 G. Herget









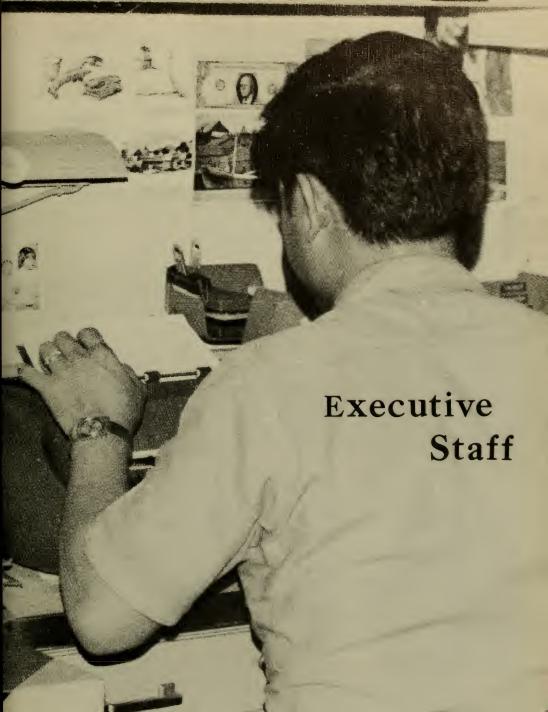


OS3 G. Lynn

OS3 N. Pizzuto

SN G. Law

OSSA L. Wechsler





LCDR J. Walker CHAPLAIN



CAPT. M. Kirin COMBAT CARGO OFFICER







1st LT. D. Gally COMBAT CARGO OFFICER



MMC E. Floor CMAA



BMI D. Coley CAREER COUNSELOR





YN1 C. Hooper PN1 D. Mazo











SSgt. E. Sherwood PN2 S. Enman

PN3 A. Baker YN3 D. Gorman







YN3 L. Leared YN3 W. Wilken



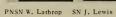




en SN R. Johnson









SN G. Snyder



SN A. Strole



PNSA R. Browning





SA M. Graham



SR K. Hanf





LT B. Nelson AIR OFFICER



ENSIGN D. Brown













ABH1 E. Hoffman ABF2 W. Styles

ABH2 M. Wells







ABH3 E. Darcey ABH3 D. Higgins ABH3 D. Mullen









ADJ3 C. Proctor ABH3 D. Rauch





ABF3 J. Strickland ABHAN M. Badget



AN A. Bartolo









AN J. Burnett AN R. Clark AN C. Freeman AN J. Freeman









AN C. Harwell



AN G. Nickolson AN L. Peterson



AN T. Thiessen AA S. Allen





AA R. Ballard AA E. Bell





AA W. Brent AA M. Brown





AA S. Chandler



AA J. Henry



AA M. Hughes



AA J. Montenegro











AA R. Rajotte AA B. Smith



AA D. Strong



AA T. Taylor AA G. Torres



AA J. Trimbur



AA J. Yaiser



AR M. Adkins



AR S. Baggett



AR J. McCorkle AR D. Smith





AR R. Starr



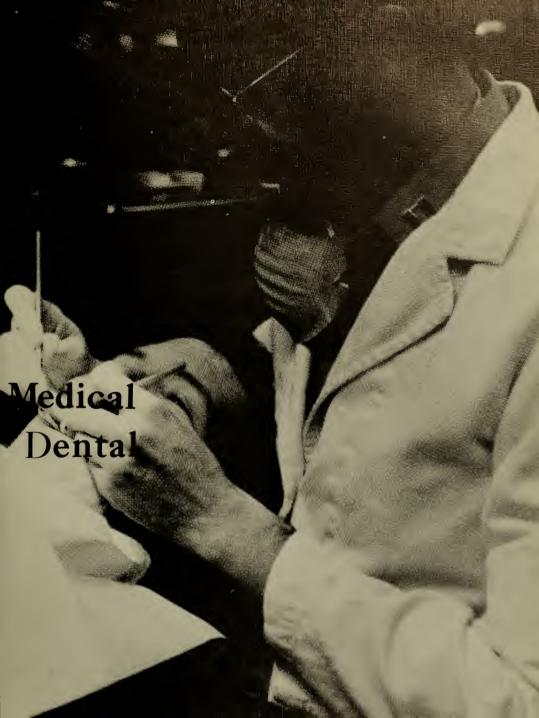
AR L. Stephens



Toylon









LT J. Herstoff MEDICAL OFFICER



LT D. Cairns DENTAL OFFICER





HMC G. Haney



HM1 J. Alford



DT2 W. Morrill



HM3 D. Suiter



HM3 J. Thelen





LCDR J. Waller SUPPLY OFFICER July 1971-April 1973



LT D. Quirk SUPPLY OFFICER April 1973



ENSIGN D. Moore DISBURSING OFFICER



ENSIGN T. Crozier FOOD SERVICES OFFICER



CSCS E. Kirk



SDC M. Rivera



SKC P. Gines



SHC R. Furey



SK1 E. Eisley

CS1 M. Johnson



SD1 F. Picardal



SH1 J. Wisenburg





SD2 A. Catacutan CS2 C. Hernandez



SH2 L. Jennings SK2 R. Manalac



N. Y

CS2 C. McDaniel SD3 A. Acuin







S113 G. Brown











SK3 W. Siani CS3 C. Smith







SN M. Benadi



SN E. Clave



SDSN J. Cottrell







SDSN M. Dialino



SDSN I, Diaz







SDSN R. Diaz



SN D. Grigsby





SN L. Mattoon



SN T. Pentce



CSSN T. Plumb



SHSN F. Poltowicz





SN K. Toman

SN D. Waters









SA A. Woodby



SDSR J. Eirhart



SR R. Weidman







SA G. Gagnon



SA L. Green





SA K. MacConnell SA M. Thorne





























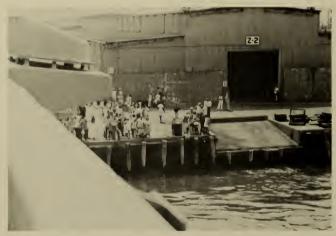






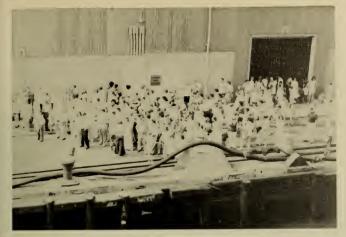








Homecoming











I must go down to the sea again
To the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship
And a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's creak, and the wind's song,
And the white sails shaking;
And a gray mist on the sea's face,
And a gray dawn breaking.

John Masefield

CRUISE BOOK OFFICER Ensign J. DiCarlo

CRUISE BOOK STAFF SH3 Braham SN G. D. Snyder

In Memory









